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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of the Constitutional Rights Foundation's Youth Community Service (YCS) program is to give disadvantaged high school students the opportunity to develop leadership, communication, and other skills to design, organize, and implement community service. This evaluation of the Los Angeles (California) YCS program examines: (1) who participates; (2) how the program operates; and (3) to what extent the program achieves its intended effects. Through a series of questionnaires, observations, and interviews, the evaluation finds that YCS is an effective program for its participants and specifically: (1) all 22 schools with YCS programs have successfully planned and implemented projects; (2) participants consistently rate the organization and its events highly; and (3) the development of leadership ability, interaction skills, and a sense of responsibility have grown steadily in the participants. Some suggested areas for further inquiry include the effect of the program on the students' school performance and why some school programs achieve greater success than others. Seventeen tables are included. (DJC)

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EVALUATION REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION'S YOUTH COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

Joan L. Herman
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EVALUATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION'S YOUTH COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

Executive Summary

In the fall of 1986, the UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation (CSE) began a year-long evaluation of the Constitutional Rights Foundation's (CRF) Youth Community Service (YCS) program. The YCS program, funded by the Ford Foundation and implemented by CRF, was then in its third year of operation in twenty schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

The YCS Program

YCS' primary purpose is to help participating youth develop leadership, communication and other skills to enable them to design, organize and implement community service projects. The program is geared toward high schools which have large numbers of students from low-income families and is intended to foster the skills and long range commitment that student need to responsibility participate in community affairs.

High school youth leaders in YCS gain experience in a broad range of organizational, planning, and project development skills. These youth then assume key roles in the creation and management of service projects for their schools and communities. Teacher sponsors and community mentors at each school site assist student leaders to use their planning and organizational skills to implement programs. In this way, in distinction to many traditional school government activities in which students work under direct adult leadership, YCS youth leaders learn to function independently, with adults serving as mentors and resources rather than control agents.

According to the YCS model, as students begin to plan for and provide community services during their high school years, they develop a sense of how institutions are organized and how leadership develops in business, the professions, and government institutions. By learning more about community needs and resources, by becoming involved in various service opportunities, and by collaborating with their peers and mentors, participating students gradually acquire information and skills which help them to effectively participate as successful adults in our society.

Further, because effective YCS participation depends heavily on students' reading, writing, oral communication, and research abilities, the program is intended to stimulate and support the school curriculum, facilitating the development of competence in basic academic skills and

fostering self-esteem and efficacy. In addition, students' acquisition of the specific skills needed to organize and complete community service projects -- for example, planning needs assessments, collecting, summarizing and interpreting data, deciding on specific projects, recruiting additional student volunteers, and carrying out their responsibilities to successful completion -- also may enhance other areas related to school success. Among these potential benefits are academic performance, school attendance, improved attitudes toward school and self, career plans, and intentions to pursue higher education.

The Evaluation Methodology

The YCS program evaluation was designed to examine three primary questions: who participated in the program; how did the program operate; and to what extent did the program achieve its intended effects on students and other participants? These questions were addressed through a series of questionnaires for all participants; observations of both selected program-wide events and local team meetings; and intensive interviews with YCS teachers, students, and community mentors from a sample of five participating schools. These activities were intended to have both formative and summative dimensions by providing ongoing information for program planners about how the program was operating and end-of-year judgments on program effectiveness.

Summary of Results

The findings of the Youth Community Service Program evaluation indicate that the Constitutional Rights Foundation has mounted an effective program to promote community service and to develop leadership and efficacy in its participants.

CRF has installed the YCS program in 22 schools, predominantly serving disadvantaged youth, and all of those schools have been able to successfully plan and implement school and/or community service projects. For the vast majority of student participants, these projects are a first exposure to sustained volunteerism.

YCS-wide orientation, training, and conferences for students and teacher sponsors strongly support program goals. Participants appeared highly satisfied with and well motivated by each of the events; they consistently rated the organization and quality of specific components in the "very good" to "excellent" range.

According to students, teachers, parents, social service agents, and community members involved in the program, YCS students have developed management skills and

have grown in their leadership ability and their ability to effectively work with others. Their growth, according to participants, has come from the process of organizing local school teams and planning and conducting community service projects, processes that were facilitated by programwide YCS efforts in training, network building, and community linking. Guided at first by teacher sponsors and supported by CRF/YCS staff efforts, most local teams and the projects they engaged in grew in student initiation and direction.

Not only have most participating students developed skills that better enable them to organize and deliver community service, but respondents also felt that they had gained a greater sense of responsibility for pursuing such projects -- a longer range commitment to community service. The sense of accomplishment from planning and successfully completing projects that help others also seems, for some students, to have resulted in increased feeling of efficacy and significant increases in self confidence.

Beyond delivery and commitment to community service, YCS participation also seems to have had some effects on students' school performance. Although based on students, parents and teachers perceptions the effects in this latter area appear weaker than in the community service arena, respondents did report some positive effects for many students. In contrast to the direct effects on management and social skills and on community service delivery and attitudes, YCS effects on school performance appear indirect -- derived largely from increased feelings of efficacy and self-direction and perhaps from a stronger connection to the school community inspired by YCS. Because of the importance of school performance for future success, the nature and extent of YCS effects in this area deserve additional inquiry, inquiry which might profitably draw on more direct student data, e.g., test performance, grades, attendance data. It seems likely, however, that strong effects on academic performance will require more direct academic interventions -- efforts that may be beyond the scope of YCS.

While most respondents were highly satisfied with the program, it was apparent that some schools had achieved more success than others -- this was apparent in respondent ratings, in the sheer size of membership at each site, in the numbers of continuing students, and in the number of projects accomplished. Such variance is to be expected: despite its apparent success, it must be remembered that YCS is a young program and still in the process of finetuning its strategies and procedures. During the evaluation, it was apparent that the success of any school team was highly dependent on the commitment and leadership of its teacher sponsor. The number of first year teacher sponsors during the year of the evaluation (a year in which only two of the

twenty two schools were first year programs) attests to considerable attrition in this area, attrition that is not conducive to the growth of strong local programs. Given the positive responses of this year's teachers, however, the teacher attrition problem is likely to diminish; further, the growing cadre of experienced teacher sponsors is likely to result in stronger local programs and less student attrition. The issue of attrition, however, for both teacher sponsors and students, should be further tracked and explored. It is clear that CRF/YCS staff are aware of these problems and working hard with local sites to alleviate them.

Finally, the role of CRF-based program staff and its program-wide activities in the success of the program should not be underestimated. They are the cement that holds the program together, stimulating commitment, providing incentives through programwide events, organizing specific skill training, building networks and facilitating access to resources that local projects can draw from, giving one-on-one assistance as necessary, and continually analyzing and refining the program.

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1986, the UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation (CSE) began a year-long evaluation of the Constitutional Rights Foundation's (CRF) Youth Community Service (YCS) program. The YCS program, funded by the Ford Foundation and implemented by CRF, was then in its third year of operation in Los Angeles Unified Schools.

CRF is a privately supported, nonprofit educational foundation which sponsors a number of school programs that involve hundreds of community volunteers annually. Headquartered in Los Angeles, CRF enjoys a longstanding, collaborative relationship with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The district has cooperated with CRF on citizen education programs for young people for over twenty years. CSE, located in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles, and funded primarily under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, has worked with the Los Angeles Unified School District in dozens of research and evaluation efforts. CSE was invited by CRF to conduct the evaluation of its YCS program. That evaluation is the subject of this report.

The report is organized as follows: The first section presents an overview of the rationale and core features underlying the YCS Program. Next, we describe the questions and methodology which were used in its evaluation, followed by the results it produced. We conclude with a synthesis of findings and recommendations for future action.

The YCS Program

Developed by CRF, the YCS program has been implemented in twenty-two high school sites throughout the LAUSD. Its primary purpose is to help participating youth develop leadership, communication and other skills to enable them to design, organize and implement community service projects. The program is geared toward high schools which have large numbers of students from low-income families and is intended to foster the skills and long range commitment that students need to responsibly participate in community affairs.

High school youth leaders in YCS gain experience in a broad range of organizational, planning, and project development skills. These youth then assume key roles in the creation and management of service projects for their schools and communities. Teacher sponsors and community mentors at each school site assist student leaders to use their planning and organizational skills to implement programs. In this way, in distinction to many traditional

school government activities in which students work under direct adult leadership, YCS youth leaders learn to function independently, with adults serving as guides and resources rather than control agents.

According to the YCS model, as students begin to plan for and provide community services during their high school years, they develop a sense of how institutions are organized and how leadership develops in business, the professions, and government institutions. By learning more about community needs and resources, by becoming involved in various service opportunities, and by collaborating with their peers and mentors, participating students gradually acquire information and skills which help them to effectively participate as successful adults in our society.

Further, because effective YCS participation depends heavily on students' reading, writing, oral communication, and research abilities, the program is intended to stimulate and support the school curriculum, facilitating the development of competence in basic academic skills and fostering self-esteem and efficacy. In addition, students' acquisition of the specific skills needed to organize and complete community service projects -- for example, planning needs assessments, collecting, summarizing and interpreting data, deciding on specific projects, recruiting additional student volunteers, and carrying out their responsibilities to successful completion -- also may enhance other areas related to school success. Among these potential benefits are academic performance, school attendance, improved attitudes toward school and self, career plans, and intentions to pursue higher education.

The YCS program offers a year-round, carefully designed training and support system to help prepare students to organize and implement service projects in their schools and surrounding communities. The system combines local site-based organization and action with program-wide networks and support activities, orchestrated by Constitutional Rights Foundation-based program staff.

Key to the program is the YCS team at each school site. working with at least one teacher sponsor, teams of 12-45 tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students (with a few sites also involving ninth graders) meet weekly at each school to prepare for, plan and implement local efforts. As alluded to above, these local efforts include the complilation of a local resource directory, conduct of school and community needs assessment, and based on these results, implementation of specific service projects. Each school also benefits from the participation of at least one adult community mentor. Working in close cooperation with teacher sponsors, community mentors (volunteer professionals) share insights into the workings of the

community, serve as role models for students, and assist them with their local projects. Community mentors also acquaint students with their professional skills and institutional connections.

YCS staff, based at CRF, support and reinforce local site teams and overall program goals through program wide training, network building, specific skill and development aids, and local trouble shooting. Among the key program-wide elements planned and implemented by YCS staff during the year were the following:

Orientation sessions for teacher sponsors prior to the beginning of the school year: These two day training sessions provided teachers the opportunity to review program-wide goals and plans, to share lessons learned from the previous year and their implications for the conduct of coming year's plans, to discuss specific problem solving strategies, and to become better oriented to the teacher-sponsor role;

Training retreats for students: Held in November and again in December of the school year, these two day sessions oriented new students to the program and engaged students in a series of workshop segments dealing with such topics as leadership, organization of project activities, developing group responsibility, conducting surveys and interviews, and working effectively with peers and adults.

Programwide conferences: Both early and later in the school year all YCS students gathered together for one day conferences to enhance their leadership, organization, and communication skills and to participate in a joint public service project. Workshops focused on project management, enlisting additional volunteer support, running effective meetings and carrying out specific roles within the project, e.g., historian-recorder, liason specialist, resource directory coordinator, school publicity director, newsletter coordinator, etc.

Program wide public service and spirit building events: Complementing training workshops are several annual program-wide events. The Welcome to America Rally, planned by an executive committee of YCS staff, students and teacher sponsors, attracted 1500 high school students to kick off in-school programs to assist new immigrants in YCS schools and communities. Two hundred YCS students participated in the annual YCS Picnic to benefit children from Hathaway Home, a home for emotionally disturbed and abused young people.

A program-wide newsletter: YCS Community Beats and the YCS Annual Report link all local teams and enables YCS students to share their feelings and accomplishments while developing their communication skills.

A CRF Handbook to assist local project development: This guide provides instructions for conducting needs assessments, researching and compiling community resource directories, documenting and evaluating their service project efforts, and conducting other aspects of local projects. It also includes a comprehensive teacher's guide.

Monthly meetings for teacher sponsors: These two hour meetings provide opportunities for network and commitment building and as well as for feedback and support on project activities.

YCS staff also provide direct service to teacher sponsors as needed on a one-to-one basis and actively assist local projects, as needed, in a variety of ways: identifying community mentors, facilitating access to donations and other community resources, helping with publicity and public relations, providing on-site training. They also maintain regular communication with school principals, parents, and community resource mentors.

METHODOLOGY

The YCS program evaluation was designed to examine three primary questions: who participated in the program; how did the program operate; and to what extent did the program achieve its intended effects on students and other participants? These questions were addressed through a series of questionnaires for all participants; observations of both selected program-wide events and local team meetings; and intensive interviews with YCS teachers, students, and community mentors from a sample of five participating schools. These activities were intended to have both formative and summative dimensions by providing ongoing information for program planners about how the program was operating and end-of-year judgments on program effectiveness.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were designed to solicit background information about participating students; to gather participants' reactions to specific YCS activities (just subsequent to those activities); and to gain their end of year perceptions of various aspects of program effectiveness. The complete set of questionnaire instruments included the following:

Student pre-program questionnaire. Distributed at the beginning of the school year, this instrument solicited background information and students' expectations for their YCS participation.

Student workshop questionnaires. Distributed at the end of both the Leadership Training Retreat and the Let's Get It Together conference, these questionnaires asked students to assess each of the workshop they had attended, using a five point scale from "unacceptable" to "excellent."

Student end-of-year questionnaire. Distributed in late May, these instruments asked students to rate and give specific examples of how the YCS program had affected various of their skills and attitudes and the extent to which they had accomplished their community service and personal goals. Approximately 350 were distributed to all students who had completed the pre-program survey. Of these students, 221 completed and returned questionnaires.

Teacher training workshop questionnaire. Solicited at after the first training/orientation session for teachers at the beginning of the year, this instrument asked teachers to rate specific elements of workshop program and to indicate the specific areas of training and/or discussion interest for future sponsor meetings.

Teacher end-of-year questionnaire. Like the student instrument, this instrument was distributed in May, 1987 and asked teachers to rate the effects of YCS on their professional development, on their students' ability and predispositions to participate in community service and on their school performance. Twenty two of the 28 teacher sponsors (78%) completed and returned questionnaires.

Community mentor end-of-year questionnaire. Eighteen community resource volunteers who had worked most closely with YCS students were asked to respond to a series of questions about the importance of youth involvement in community service, the effectiveness of their role in YCS and the effects of the program on students. Of these volunteers, 13 (72%) completed and returned questionnaires.

Community agency end-of-year questionnaire. Fifty community agencies with whom YCS students had worked were asked for their perceptions of the importance of school-based community service programs, and the effectiveness of the YCS program in preparing students for community service responsibilities. Thirty-nine (78%) community agency representatives completed and returned their questionnaires.

Note that because of the amount of start-up time typically associated with intial entry into the YCS program, schools in the first year of program implementation were

specifically excluded from the beginning- and end-of-year questionnaire studies.

Observations and Interviews

Supplementing this questionnaire data were observations and interviews during core program-wide events, and closeup analysis of team operations in five schools.

CSE staff observed three program-wide events to get a first-hand view of program operations, participating students and teachers from all sites, the nature of their interactions, and participants' reactions to the program as well as to the specific events. The initial two-day teacher orientation/training session, the two-day Leadership Training Retreat, and the Let's Get It Together conference were the subjects of observations; participant interviews were also conducted during these occasions.

Additional observations of team meetings and interviews with YCS students and teachers also were conducted in five schools selected for more intensive study. The purpose of these observations and interviews were to get a more detailed picture of how local school programs operated and how they affected students -- especially in the growth of their leadership and communications skills.

The five schools selected for this more intensive study were chosen to represent common demographic patterns (based on ethnicity and socioeconomic status) in the Los Angeles Unified Schools District. Of the five school selected, three were in their third year of operations and two were in their second year.

RESULTS

The results section which follows is organized by the primary evaluation questions driving the study, combining all sources of relevant data:

Who participated in the program?

How did the program operate?

To what extent did the program achieve its intended effects?

Who Participated in the Program?

Participating schools. As was mentioned earlier in this report, YCS currently operates in 22 LAUSD high schools. Because low income students are a particular target, Table 1 examines the socioeconomic status of these schools. This table shows the SES rank of these schools

compared to the total pool of 800 high schools within the state.

Table 1

SES Rank of Participating Schools
(N=22)

High School	SES Rank
Jordan	1
Fremont	3
Jefferson	4
Washington	7
Lincoln	9
Manual Arts	12
Roosevelt	15
Belmont	23
Huntington Park	29
Franklin	36
Los Angeles	110
Polytechnic	176
San Pedro	251
Venice	276
Hamilton	339
Van Nuys	362
Canoga Park	429
Grant	473
Fairfax	526
Westchester	651
Granada Hills	707
University	728

These rankings indicate that over half of the YCS schools (12) fall in the lowest quarter of the statewide school population; and over seventy-five percent are ranked in the lower half of the state's SES distribution.

Of the 22 current YCS schools, two were in their first year of implementation (these, recall, were excluded from end of year questionnaire solicitation); ten were in their second year of implementation; and the remaining ten were in their third year. It is of interest to note that all of the latter schools (in fact the first to enter the YCS program) rank socioeconomically below the lowest quarter of state schools. In contrast, the newest schools to the program, those in their first year during the evaluation, were in the top 20 percent of schools on the SES dimension.

Participating students. Based on those who completed the pre-program questionnaire, Table 2 displays the distribution of YCS students by grade level and years of participation. The figures indicate that tenth grade

students in their first year of program participation are the typical participants, representing almost half the total pool. Second most common are eleventh grade students in their second year of participation, representing just under a fifth of respondents.

This pattern is consistent with the YCS practice of recruiting new members from the tenth grade and with their expectation that because of such things as involvement in other school leadership activities and student-school transiency, participation may well drop out after the first or second year. In fact, the YCS program design anticipates 12 tenth grade students as a base for each year, with the first cohort of tenth graders diminishing to 8 students as second year eleventh graders and to 4 students as third year twelfth graders. The figures in Table 2 suggest, however, that the drop-off rate is higher than originally anticipated, an incidence worthy of further exploration.

Table 2:
Grade Levels by Number of Years in YCS (N=358)

	Years in YCS			
Grade	1st	2nd	3rd	Total
9th	6.4% (23)	-	-	6.4% (23)
10th	44.1%(158)	1.1%(4)	-	45.3%(162)
11th	17.9%(64)	18.7%(67)	-	36.6%(131)
12th	2.5%(9)	4.2%(15)	5.0%(18)	11.7%(42)
Total	70.9%(254)	24.0%(86)	5.0%(18)	100%(358)

Given the interest of YCS in involving students who otherwise might be uninvolved in school activities, Table 3 shows the proportion of responding students who attend high school outside their home community (a fairly common situation in overcrowded LAUSD), a status which typically retracts from school involvement. While YCS programs are drawing primarily from their schools' residence area, note that they are attracting a substantial minority of students who reside outside the neighborhood area. The reality of LAUSD overcrowding and demographics suggests that students in this latter category tend to be minority students who are bussed, through either voluntary desegregation programs or involuntary capacity adjustment programs, from their overcrowded neighborhoods to less crowded schools.

Table 3:
Number of Students Attending School in Home Community (N=358)

Yes	No
262 (73%)	96 (27%)

Because YCS aims to give students experience in public service and to equip them with the skills and attitudes to pursue such projects, students previous experience in this area is of interest. Table 4, showing the number of respondents who have done volunteer work prior to or in addition to YCS, indicates that the great majority of respondents, nearly three-quarters, were introduced to volunteer work for the first time with their entry into the YCS program.

Table 4:
Number of Students
Who Have Done Volunteer Work in Addition to YCS (N=358)

Yes	No
101 (28%)	257 (72%)

Content analysis of the written commentary provided with this item suggests that YCS was a first involvement with sustained volunteer activity for even greater numbers of students. Those claiming some prior experience with volunteer work described these activities as such things as babysitting, visiting a convalescent home, helping in a fund raiser. Note that these activities connote relatively short term efforts and not the kind of sustained volunteerism associated with YCS participation. Further, the kinds of activities students mentioned typically involve a high degree of adult control and supervision -- different from the kind of student initiated effort associated with YCS. It seems very likely, then, that for the vast majority of students, their participation in YCS was a first exposure to long-term, self-directed volunteerism.

What other opportunities for responsibility outside school and home had YCS students had prior to their YCS participation? Table 5 shows the proportion of respondents who had ever held a paying part-time or summer job. The results indicate that about two-thirds of the respondents had not had the responsibility of paid employment (although perhaps if students were employed, they would not have time for YCS involvement).

Table 5:
Number of Students Who Have Ever Had a Paying Part-time or Summer Job (N=358)

Yes	No
120	238
(33%)	(67%)

What did students expect from their participation in YCS? Four items on the pre-program questionnaire focused on student aspirations. Asked to state their primary reason for deciding either to join or to continue in a YCS team, students most frequently offered the following types of reasons, in descending order of occurrence:

service orientation, e.g., to help the school and/or community

social orientation, e.g., to be involved in group activities, to be involved with and/or meet new people

YCS prior success/reputation, e.g.,had heard about YCS's excellent qualities, because last year's activities were rewarding

Practical skills orientation, e.g., to gain practical experience, to help prepare for a career, to help prepare for college, to have a new learning experience

Leadership orientation, e.g., to gain or enhance leadership skills, to become a leader in the future

A related item on the questionnaire asked students to state the area in which they would most like to improve by their participation in YCS. The areas they mentioned most frequently were:

Self management and planning skills, e.g.,work habits, self-discipline, planning or organizing skills, responsibility, time management

self-concept, e.g., self-confidence, self-esteem, emotional strength

communication skills, e.g., ability to work with others, social skills, speaking, language arts

leadership skills

The next item in this series asked students what they hoped to be able to give to their school and community

through their involvement in YCS. The central themes in their responses involved improving their communities, improving their schools, and helping people in need, with little elaboration provided.

The final item in this group asked students what they hoped to achieve for themselves by participation in a YCS project. Analysis of responses here indicated that students were most concerned with:

gaining a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from helping others

learning how to help and work with others

acquiring or improving their leadership skills

gaining self-worth e.g., sense of responsibility, self-confidence or esteem, earning trust

gaining practical knowledge and skills

Note that the majority of responses showed a dual concern for self and others. On the one hand, student aspirations clearly reveal an outward, altruistic orientation, a desire to be of some help to others and to improve their communities. On the other hand, student aspirations also point directly inward, suggesting that they foresaw clear benefits for themselves in such activities.

How Did The Program Operate?

This section of the report details the more formative aspects of the evaluation inquiry which investigated the nature of and participants' reactions to specific YCS program activities. These activities included the initial training workshop held for teacher sponsors early in the year; the initial orientation and training sessions held for students; the midyear student training conference; and a sample of local team meetings. The selection includes key activities for each of the core YCS participant groups, i.e., students and teacher sponsors. Because these activities also were spaced over the full year, their observation permitted changes over time in student and/or teacher behavior and attitudes to be noted.

Teacher orientation and training. In September, 1986, YCS staff organized and held an orientation and training session for all teacher sponsors. The session focused on teachers' responsibilities in YCS, YCS-developed resources for facilitating local team and project development, and strategies for assuring effective local projects. Because both new and returning YCS sponsors attended, the session

also provided opportunities to share experiences and previous lessons learned.

Responses from the twenty-two teacher sponsors who attended suggest that the training activity was highly successful. As their quality ratings in Table 6 show, teachers judged almost all the workshop and discussion segments as very good to excellent. They were particularly impressed with the YCS documentary video and the resource handbook, two exportable products which have been carefully developed by YCS staff. The session on skill builders (student workbooks for specific skill development) was a relative weakness compared to other segments, but still received good ratings from most participants.

Table 6:
Teacher Ratings of Initial Training Workshop (N=22)

Workshop Component	Rating
Introduction to Skill Builders	3.9
Handbook as a Resource Guide	4.8
Community Networking Activity	4.4
Student Recruitment and Ongoing Involvement, Planning, and Review	4.6
Projects' Discussion	4.2
Public Relations Discussion	4.3
Open Agenda Segments	4.4
YCS Documentary Video	4.7
Overall Rating	4.4

Ratings were on a five-point scale from "unacceptable" to "excellent".

The uniformly high ratings also suggest that both new and returning teachers were highly satisfied with the sessions. Table 7 shows how the attendees were distributed by years of service in YCS, figures which mirror the programwide distribution.

Table 7:
Distribution of Teacher Sponsors by Years in YCS (N=22)

Beginning First Year	Second Year	Third Year
10 (45%)	8 (36%)	4 (18%)

Teacher sponsors also were asked to suggest topics for future discussion and training. Among their principal suggestions were the following:

pluralism and working with multi-ethnic groups
group dynamics
resource development
public relations
student motivation
project development
YCS-curriculum connections

These topics, and others that surfaced to meet program contingencies, were foci for monthly teacher sponsor meetings that CRF organized monthly during the remainder of the school year.

Leadership Training Retreat. Because CRF wanted to provide students with an esprit de corps and skill building experience in a non-school setting, they planned a two-day, overnight retreat for YCS students and their teacher sponsors. The large number of students involved in YCS necessitated the provision of two nearly identical retreats, one in November and the second in December, 1986, with approximately half of the students and their teacher sponsors in residence at each.

The primary function of the retreat was to orient new students to YCS goals and objectives. The agenda featured a varied program of activities, including group-building exercises, simulations, role plays and discussion sessions focused on the qualities of leadership, human relations, community problems and needs, and how YCS projects could help people and improve their communities. The agenda also featured ample opportunities for social interaction.

Observation of the first retreat and analysis of student questionnaire results indicated that the two days were highly valued and very well-received. [It]...was the most exciting retreat I ever attended," commented one student;"...was a great, funfilled, and rewarding weekend," concurred another. Students appeared highly motivated to begin their YCS projects, and in fact resource speakers at the retreat spurred specific school projects. Several school teams, for example, followed up by participating in D.A.R.E (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) visits to elementary school classrooms. One or two logistical improvements were made in preparation for the second retreat, which was identical in content and focus to the first.

Reactions to the second retreat were similarly positive. Because there were no significant differences in student ratings on the two occasions, the two sets of

evaluation data were merged and appear in Table 8. All sessions consistently were highly rated, with mean ratings between "very good" and "excellent"

Table 8:
Evaluation Results of the Leadership Training Retreats
(N=184)

Activity	Rating
What's a Leader? (discussion)	4.4
Community Building (introductions & map skills)	4.3
What's in a Difference (race & human relations discussion)	4.5
School Exchanges (role plays)	4.6
Conducting Interviews (with community leaders)	4.5
Group Problem Solving (how to address group concerns)	4.5
Overall Rating	4.5

Results based on a five-point rating scale, ranging from unacceptable to excellent.

"Let's Get it Together" Conference. In February of 1987, CRF conducted a one-day conference bringing together almost 200 YCS students and their teacher sponsors. As was mentioned in the introduction to this report, this event was intended to reinforce the skills students and teachers needed to plan and manage local projects; to strengthen tactical skills for service delivery; and to enhance commitment to both YCS and local team progress. The event was hosted by Grant High School's YCS team which contributed heavily to its planning and implementation (and provided the afternoon entertainment, a skit). Students chose from among a variety of workshops, including those aimed at the development of specific leadership and project development skills, e.g., running a meeting, conducting telephone surveys, and those preparatory to YCS program-wide service projects and opportunities, e.g., Welcome to America, Hathaway Home Picnic, etc. Resource people from community agencies also were on hand to present students with volunteer opportunities, e.g., Wilderness Fair, and to share the challenge of community work.

Local school teams were encouraged to organize and disperse themselves so that the team as a whole would have the benefit of all relevant workshops. In this way, each team had representatives attending the various workshop segments, and these representatives then reported back to their team what they had learned. Like the training retreat, this conference also provided opportunities for social interaction between students from different schools.

The results of student ratings, shown in Table 9, indicate that students were very positive about the conference experience, an event which included "...making new friends, exchanging ideas, having fun, and coming home with bright, new ideas that will help improve the school and community." Again, students consistently rated all segments in the "very good" to "excellent" range.

Table 9:
Evaluation Results of the "Let's Get it Together" Conference
(N=178)

Activity	Rating
YCS Group Management and Team Building	4.6
The Art of Telephone Use	4.4
Making Projects Happen: From Initiative to Follow-through	4.4
Effective Communication Skills	4.5
Newsletter: The YCS Communication Lifeline	4.3
The Great Project Search	4.3
Drug Use, Drug Abuse	4.7
Working with Senior Citizens	4.6
Assisting Retarded Youth and Adults	4.5
Making Use of the Great Outdoors	4.4
Community Beautification	4.5
Welcome to America	4.6
YCS Picnic	4.4
Year End Celebration Conference of Youth Community Services	4.4
Overall Rating	4.5

Weekly meetings of school teams. During the school year, each local YCS team met on an average of twice weekly -- two lunch meetings or one lunch and one afterschool meetings -- to plan for membership recruitment, to hear presentations, decide on projects, plan and organize specific activities, hear reports about progress toward those activities and evaluate the process and outcomes of those completed.

Guided initially by teacher sponsors and supported by procedures in the YCS handbook and training, students are intended to be in charge during the meetings and to have genuine responsibility both for decisionmaking and for deploying themselves to assure successful project completion. Observations of a sample of meetings at mid to end of year indicated that students generally had assumed such responsibilities: All observed meetings were chaired by students and featured predominantly student-initiated

transactions: progress reports on specific delegated tasks and projects, requests for assistance and problem solving discussions, and debriefings and feedback on completed projects.

Conversations with teachers and students suggested that passing responsibility and control from teacher to students had required significant patience and effort. Because in many cases teachers had directly recruited members and students had few experiences in leadership, teachers were perceived as in control and relied on for authority. As one student commented, "It wasn't easy to get organized, but now we can hold organized meetings."

The program's frequent success in achieving student direction and control in local meetings is illustrated by one meeting involving a community agency representative. Prior to this meeting, this representive had requested and was granted from students the opportunity to make a presentation before the group about the agency's needs for assistance. At the meeting, the student chairman introduced the speaker and directed the questions & answer period subsequent to the presentation. The chairman then thanked the speaker and told her he would get back to her after the group discussed and made a decision on her request. After the agency person left, the group considered whether and how they might respond to the assistance request. They decided to respond, and then assigned responsibilities for completing the project, an effort that required the recruitment of additional students. In discussing effective recruitment strategies, they explicitly considered the strengths and weaknesses of those used in prior projects.

The size of student teams varied considerably from site to site, apparently reflecting differential success in recruiting and/or maintaining active memberships

Finetuning operations. CRF/YCS staff provide a strong model in using feedback to improve its future operations. CRF staff gave continual attention during the year to finetuning YCS processes, participant roles and resource materials. Based on observations and analysis of local sites and feedback from students, teacher mentors and others, two major improvements were made on the basis of evaluation findings.

First, it was discovered that teachers and students were finding the Handbook resource described earlier somewhat intimidating and unwieldy. The handbook had been carefully developed for program participants over several years to articulate the full range of strategies that might be employed in local project development, e.g., community assessment, resource development, documentation, management, recruitment, publicity, service delivery, and so forth. The

result is an impressive compendium of resources that in the past had been provided to each participating student and each teacher sponsor. Because project members were under the impression that they had to make use of every resource in the Handbook in order to mount an effective project, some felt overwhelmed and discouraged with their accomplishments. In actuality, the Handbook was intended for use on an "as needed" basis -- as appropriate to a particular activity and its unique needs. To rectify this source of frustration, each project now has on file a copy or two of the complete Handbook, while each student member now has a streamlined version containing only those resources most likely to be needed and geared toward the particular student's responsibility in the local setting. All teams, however, are still expected to complete written project proposals and evaluations for each project undertaken.

A second major change resulting from the formative evaluation involved the role of the community mentor. Rather than serving as a mentor for a single school site, the community mentors, renamed community resource volunteers (CRV), now serve as resources for all YCS participants. Any school group may contact the CRV whose expertise and/or contacts best fits particular project needs. In this new capacity, a CRV may have contact with several schools during the year. The purpose of the contact, however, can still range from community networking to providing assistance in planning and implementing local projects. CRVs also continue to share their professional expertise and accomplishments with students and maintain their important role model function.

Both these changes apparently have been quite beneficial. Teachers pointed to the Handbook as one of the most valuable and effective resources in the program. Likewise, responses to the Community Resource Volunteer questionnaires suggest that these individuals are highly satisfied with their new roles.

What Are the Effects of the YCS Program?

This section reports on the extent to which YCS is meeting its major goals for students and its' effects on teacher sponsors and others in the community. These findings draw on the self-reports of students, teacher sponsors, parents, and community mentors as well as on documentation and direct observation of YCS events.

Do YCS Students Organize and Implement Community and School Service Projects? The roster of projects which YCS teams planned and implemented clearly indicates yes. These included:

establishing long-term relationships with local convalescent and retirement homes, including regular visits, special student-provided programs, monthly birthday parties, etc.;

organizing and implementing school cleanup and beautification campaigns;

launching community cleanup and beautification campaigns;

organizing special holiday events for disabled children;

planning and implementing food and clothing drives for the needy and homeless;

Organizing and implementing on-site childcare to enable parents to participate in school events (e.g., School Council, Back to School Night, PSTA);

In addition to these service projects which were planned and conducted by YCS teams, members also responded to requests for assistance from a variety of public service agency projects, e.g.,

Assisting the Braille Institute in activities for blind children;

Helping the Red Cross in the LA Marathon;

Completing a book labeling project for the public library;

Assisting in the Wilderness Fair

Participating in a walkathon for the March of Dimes

Providing volunteers for the DARE project

Helping a large museum provide services to its patrons

All school teams planned and organized at least one project in addition to participating in CRF-wide activities. However, there was considerable disparity in the number of projects undertaken. Some school teams clearly were more productive than others in this regard, a seeming result of membership size (i.e., those teams with a larger, active membership were involved in a greater number of public service projects) and local leadership.

By most accounts, students' planning and implementation of these various events was successful. As the results in Table 10 show, students and teacher sponsors responded

positively when asked whether YCS had helped students to learn how to plan and organize community service activities and whether students had accomplished their plans to help their communities and schools through YCS.

Table 10: Effects of YCS on Students' Ability to Provide Community Service

Students & Teachers Responses

	Students	Teachers
Has YCS helped you (students) in knowing how to plan and organize community service activity?	3.9	3.6
Did you accomplish your plans to help your community and school through YCS?	3.8	NA

Ratings on five point scale, from not at all to very effective

Community agency staff for whom YCS students had provided service were even more positive about the program's effectiveness in preparing students for community service. They highly rated students performance in assessing needs and performing service and opined that these efforts were principally student-directed and managed. They also felt that these same students in the future would be able to plan and implement community service projects without the support of their teacher-sponsors or YCS. (See Table 11) It is of interest to note that the service receivers (community agencies) appear relatively more satisfied with the quality of service than the service providers (students and teachers).

Table 11: Community Agency Reactions to YCS Service Delivery

a. Do you think that YCS has been effective in preparing students to take responsibility for community service?	4.4
b. How well did YCS students identify and assess a need or needs they might help you with?	4.3
c. How well did YCS students implement a project or service to meet the need or needs?	4.4
d. In your opinion, how much of that effort reflected <u>student</u> management exclusively?	4.4
e. In your opinion, would these same students, without the support of their teacher-sponsor or YCS, be able to plan and implement community service activities in the future?	4.4

Does YCS Affect Student Commitment to Community Service? The ability to plan and manage public service projects is one prerequisite to encouraging community service; fostering a sense of responsibility to one's community and to others who need help is an equally important part of the equation. To what extent does YCS foster such a sense of commitment? This is a difficult question to answer and one for which self-report data is especially weak (because of bias toward socially acceptable responses). Nonetheless, in order to raise the question for the evaluation, students, teachers, parents, community resource mentors,and social agency staff were asked about perceived YCS effects in this area. Table 12 shows that responses were positive, especially from parents, community resource volunteers, and social service agency staff. Note also that virtually all students indicated that they plan to continue working in community service activities after they leave YCS.

Table 12:
Perceived Effects of YCS on
Student Commitment to Community Service

The views of students, teachers, parents, community resource volunteers and social agency staff

	Stdnts	Tchrs	Par	CRV
Has participation in YCS increased students' sense of responsibility for community service?	4.0	4.2	4.5	4.4

	Tchrs	SSA
How likely are YCS students to continue to do community service in the future (after leaving YCS)?	3.9	4.6

Par=Parents; CRV=Community Resource Volunteers; SSA=Social Service Agency Staff

Intensive interviews with students indicated that they were clearly oriented toward social change and they welcomed the opportunity to take the initiative in fostering such change. As one young woman put it:

> Youth Community Service has developed my desire to involve myself more with the community. It teaches me to care and to help others.....[It] shows you the need for people to unite to help our schools and community. If we do unite, there is nothing that cannot be accomplished.

Another young man eloquently articulated the sense of commitment he derived from his involvement in YCS:

> Many things bring joy to one's life. The smell of a hot, freshly baked pie, a trip to Disneyland. But there is no feeling like the kind one gets when an elderly person smiles and says thank you for caring or when a child's face beams when he beats you at muscial chairs. These moments make all the planning and all the fuss worthwhile. I have been in YCS for two years now, and I still enjoy the simple pleasures that accompany an event. That's why YCS is the most important organization for me. ...I'll continue my community work long after I leave high school.

Does YCS Affect Students' Leadership and Social Skills? YCS-wide training and conferences emphasized the development of leadership and people skills to enable students to

proactively pursue social action goals and to work effectively with others. Table 12 suggests that students feel these efforts were effective. The majority of students agree that participation in YCS has increased their understanding of leadership and their skill in using it. They likewise agree that YCS has better enabled them to work with adults and with those who need help from community service agencies. Beyond this self-report data, students' ability to mobilize effort, to plan and implement public service projects, and to maintain active local YCS teams is evidence of their skills in leading and working with people.

The following anecdote derived from case study observations captures the effects YCS has on some students'assertiveness and social skills:

> During the student leadership retreat in November, 1986, the evaluator spent time observing all of the school projects, but especially those participating in the case study. Working with one of these schools, the evaluator was quite taken by the plight of a particular female, white tenth grader. Shy, on the fringes of group activity, extremely reticent, not so neatly attired as her peers, this young woman seemed to be a prime candidate for YCS intervention. During the two days of the retreat, this young woman "participated" in very little. Her teacher sponsor, when asked if the student was perhaps feeling unwell, replied that this behavior was the student's typical mode.
>
> Three months later, during the all-school February conference, this same tenth grader was observed to have become an active participant -- asking direct questions, seeking clarification, enjoying herself and, perhaps, her new-found identity. However, in addition to having acquired a better sense of her own worth and abilities, she now seemed to be in a position to show her concerns for her peers.
>
> At the end of a question-and-answer session on a particular topic, a session in which the young student had asked several questions, the CRF staff member thought that all questions had been answered and was about to move on. She had not noticed a young black male student, a team member of the young woman being described here, timidly half raising his hand for a question. Before the CRF staff member could move to the next topic, the formerly shy student jumped into action. "Excuse me," she said. "But Eric here has a question you didn't get to." Eric's question was answered, and the young woman sat down, obviously pleased that she had helped someone become more involved in the program.

Beyond confidence and leadership building, note that students' responses to the last two questions in Table 12 also address potential YCS effects in linking students more effectively with their community and more particularly in connecting them with a network that may increase their success as adults. That is, the experience of meeting and working successfully with professionals in social service agencies may also open the door to additional professional contacts and better access to other community resources. As one young woman put it, "Family members and friends are really impressed when we tell them how we met community leaders."

Table 12:
Perceptions of Effects on Leadership and Social Skills

a. Has participation in YCS increased your understanding of leadership?	4.1
b. Has participation in YCS increased your ability as a leader?	4.1
c. Has YCS helped you to work better with adults who help set up community service activities?	4.0
d. Has YCS made you better at working with people who need help from community service programs?	4.0

What About Effects on Students'Schoolwork? Bureaucratic constraints did not permit the collection of student grades or other academic performance indicators, so answers to this question also have to rely on the reports of YCS students, their parents and teacher sponsors. The results, shown in Table 13 suggest that all groups believed that YCS participation carried some benefits for students' academic performance in school. Note, however, that the responses are considerably less positive than those related to skill development in and delivery of community service.

Table 13:
Perceptions of Effects on Schoolwork

	Stdnts	Teach	Par
Has participation in YCS helped you (students) do better in school?	3.7	3.6	4.1
Has participation in YCS improved students' attendance at school?		3.8	

Asked to amplify the ways in which YCS has influenced academic performance, about one third of the students and nearly half their responding parents and teacher sponsors did so. Students mentioned improvements in their communication skills and particularly their ability to participate in class discussions; improvements in their attitudes toward school and its importance; and spending more time studying and doing homework. Interviews with students in case study schools echoed these general areas of improvement and provided additional detail. Students cited specific improvements in language arts skills, particularly in oral communication and to a lesser extent writing and reading. In addition, many interviewees suggested that their acquisition of YCS-promoted skills (planning, information gathering, problem solving, working with others) was beginning to make them more attentive students, who were enjoying greater involvement in classroom activities. They were beginning to ask questions and to gain a firmer sense of the world around them -- academic and social.

Teacher and parent responses reiterated these same sentiments. They particularly mentioned observing positive changes in their students' study and work habits, their independence, and their attitudes toward school; a number of parents also noted improvements in grades and progress in specific courses (English, History).

In some cases, reported effects on academic performance were dramatic, as the case of an eleventh-grader just about to complete his second year of YCS participation demonstrates. During the course of an interview, this young black man, apropos of YCS effect on his schoolwork, proudly announced that, having started off as a marginal "C" student, he had recently been recognized by his school for gains in both academics and industrial education. While this young man was able to discuss his own contribution to such gains, he cheerily pointed out that he "didn't care much about school" before joining YCS.

What About Other Effects on Students? Parents and students responses about the effects of YCS on student schoolwork emphasize affective changes in their attitudes toward and motivation for schooling. When asked to rate these changes directly, parents were very positive (see Table 14). Most felt that YCS participation had strongly influenced their children's attitudes toward school, toward themselves, and towards others.

Table 14:
Parent Perceptions of the Effects on YCS on Student Attitudes

Has participation in YCS improved your child's attitude toward school?	4.2
Do you think that participation in YCS has improved your child's attitude toward him-or herself?	4.4
Do you think that participation in YCS has improved your child's attitude toward others?	4.3

One student's comments well exemplify the potential power of such changes:

> I thought I didn't have much 'til I saw those kids from the home [Hathaway House for abused children]. They got nothing and I'm showing them that we care. I'm gonna do good in school so I can get to college and get a job where I can help the community. My brother laughs at me, but he never had YCS in his school [which] he never even finished. As for me, I'm gonna graduate next year and go to college. .

The observations of another, third year student show similar feelings of efficacy:

> When the teachers started to tell us that we could change the world to make it better, I couldn't see it. But I think now that maybe we can make the world better. If we're different than our folks were when they were kids we can all live together and no fighting. YCS helping other people is maybe just a start. [But] you need to start some place, even if it's just cleaning the street and the gang stuff [grafitti].

What About Effects on YCS on Teachers? Students are the primary targets of YCS goals, but teachers may also be

influenced by the program -- through direct training experiences, through monthly meetings, through participation in community service, and through modeling YCS program strategies. The results in Table 15 indicate that teachers feel that participation in YCS has increased their understanding of planning and management skills, and have had some effects on their own abilities in these areas.

Table 15:
Perceptions of Effects on Teachers

a. Has participation in YCS increased your understanding of planning, organizing, and management skills?	4.0
b. Has participation in YCS increased your ability to plan, organize, and manage?	3.6
c. Has participation in YCS had a positive effect on your teaching skills?	4.1
d. Did participation in YCS help you accomplish your plans to help your community and school?	4.3

While many teachers perhaps felt that their skills in these areas were already finely honed, some did experience growth. For example, one teacher commented on the effects of his helping students to plan their time so that community service activities would not detract from school work. He offered the following:

> Working with the students on planning and management skills has helped me take a closer look at my own practices. What I mean is that just as the YCS business might get in the way of students' class work without good organizing and time-management skills, the same thing could happen to me. Working on these skills with the CRF people and the students also helped me to prioritize my own time and make sure that I can pull it all off. I get as much out of it as the kids.

Teachers were also quite positive about the effects of the program on their teaching. Some felt that participating with their students in community service gave them greater insight into their students as individuals and into how best to capitalize on their personal and academic strengths and weaknesses. As one teacher pointed out:

> Every time we work on a [YCS] project I learn more about the YCS kids and students in general. From seeing what they can do when <u>they</u> set it up, it helps

me know better what I can try for in class and how to let them know what they are really capable of.

Another teacher also talked of direct impact on classroom teaching:

> Seeing what needs to be done in the community and how my students are able to respond helps me keep things current in class. I can focus on what we've seen and worked on, how the students responded to needs, and build on that to get at issues in education and society. I've built some good discussion topics, for all my students, from what I've seen in YCS work.

As the figures in Table 15 attest, teachers also were very satisfied with their accomplishments in helping the school and community. Interestingly, teachers were considerably more satisfied than their students in this area. (See Table 10 for student ratings)

Other Indicators of Satisfaction with the Program. Parents, community resource volunteers, and social service agencies strongly endorsed the importance of programs which encourage students to participate in community service. They feel that such participation is critically important and that schools can and should play a role in fostering it (see Table 16)

Table 16:
Perceived Importance of School-Based Community Service Programs

	Par	SSA
a. How important is it for students to participate in community service?	4.6	4.7
b. How important is it for schools to prepare students to become involved in community service activities?	4.4	4.5
	CRV	
c. How important is it for agencies like YCS to work with schools to prepare students to take responsibility for community service?	4.5	

The high ratings (reported earlier) accorded YCS for preparing students, in both skill and attitude, to take responsibility for public service suggests that YCS is fufilling this important mandate. In light of the program's uniformly high ratings in most all areas, it is interesting

to see the extent to which students and teachers' feel they have achieved their personal goals for the program (Table 17). While teachers' ratings of satisfaction on this area are consistent with most of their other judgments about the program, students report relatively less satisfaction with their goal attainment compared to their other ratings. Looking back to their expectations for the program and their predominant motivation to help others, it may be that they had unrealistic expectations for what they would be able to accomplish and/or were unaware of the planning and leadership skills and organization they would need to acquire to embark on such helping activities. Many schools had a preponderance of first year students, and some required considerable time to get organized and moving.

Table 17:
Achievement of Personal Goals

	Students	Teachers
Did you achieve your personal goals from participation in the YCS program?	3.7	4.1

Nonetheless, the vast majority of students said they would recommend the program to friends who ask them about joining. Similarly, all teachers agreed that they would recommend to inquiring colleagues that they become YCS teacher sponsors.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the Youth Community Service program evaluation indicate that the Constitutional Rights Foundation has mounted an effective program to promote community service and to develop leadership and efficacy in its participants.

CRF has installed the YCS program in 22 schools, predominantly serving disadvantaged youth, and all of those schools have been able to successfully plan and implement school and/or community service projects. For the vast majority of student participants, these projects are a first exposure to sustained volunteerism.

YCS-wide orientation, training, and conferences for students and teacher sponsors strongly support program goals. Participants appeared highly satisfied with and well motivated by each of the events; they consistently rated the organization and quality of specific components in the "very good" to "excellent" range.

According to students, teachers, parents, social service agents, and community members involved in the program, YCS students have developed management skills and have grown in their leadership ability and their ability to effectively work with others. Their growth, according to participants, has come from the process of organizing local school teams and planning and conducting community service projects, processes that were facilitated by programwide YCS efforts in training, network building, and community linking. Guided at first by teacher sponsors and supported by CRF/YCS staff efforts, most local teams and the projects they engaged in grew in student initiation and direction.

Not only have most participating students developed skills that better enable them to organize and deliver community service, but respondents also felt that they had gained a greater sense of responsibility for pursuing such projects -- a longer range commitment to community service. The sense of accomplishment from planning and successfully completing projects that help others also seems, for some students, to have resulted in increased feeling of efficacy and significant increases in self confidence.

Beyond delivery and commitment to community service, YCS participation also seems to have had some effects on students' school performance. Although based on students, parents and teachers perceptions the effects in this latter area appear weaker than in the community service arena, respondents did report some positive effects for many students. In contrast to the direct effects on management and social skills and on community service delivery and attitudes, YCS effects on school performance appear indirect -- derived largely from increased feelings of efficacy and self-direction and perhaps from a stronger connection to the school community inspired by YCS. Because of the importance of school performance for future success, the nature and extent of YCS effects in this area deserve additional inquiry, inquiry which might profitably draw on more direct student data, e.g., test performance, grades, attendance data. It seems likely, however, that strong effects on academic performance will require more direct academic interventions -- efforts that may be beyond the scope of YCS.

While most respondents were highly satisfied with the program, it was apparent that some schools had achieved more success than others -- this was apparent in respondent ratings, in the sheer size of membership at each site, in the numbers of continuing students, and in the number of projects accomplished. Such variance is to be expected: despite its apparent success, it must be remembered that YCS is a young program and still in the process of finetuning its strategies and procedures. During the evaluation, it

was apparent that the success of any school team was highly dependent on the commitment and leadership of its teacher sponsor. The number of first year teacher sponsors during the year of the evaluation (a year in which only two of the twenty two schools were first year programs) attests to considerable attrition in this area, attrition that is not conducive to the growth of strong local programs. Given the positive responses of this year's teachers, however, the teacher attrition problem is likely to diminish; further, the growing cadre of experienced teacher sponsors is likely to result in stronger local programs and less student attrition. The issue of attrition, however, for both teacher sponsors and students, should be further tracked and explored. It is clear that CRF/YCS staff are aware of these problems and working hard with local sites to alleviate them.

Finally, the role of CRF-based program staff and its program-wide activity in the success of the program should not be underestimated. They are the cement that holds the program together, stimulating commitment, providing incentives through program-wide events, organizing specific skill training, building networks and facilitating access to resources that local projects can draw from, giving one-on-one assistance as necessary, and continually analyzing and refining the program.